



Memo

To: Tim Cross, Principal Planner, York County
From: Marc Cornell
CC: Vernon Geddy
Date: 5/24/2006
Re: Proposed Magruder School Tower Site Justification

Tim,

NTELOS currently provides PCS wireless services in York County from communications sites developed at various times beginning in 1996. The NTELOS network was originally developed to provide vehicular level services, concentrating on the Route 17 and Route 177 (Victory Boulevard) corridors. Recently, NTELOS has targeted improvements to its wireless services on the peninsula in residential areas as a response to evolving and increasing customer demand for wireless voice and data services. Submitted with the application for the proposed Magruder School communications site are propagation plots which clearly show major gaps in coverage in the western areas of the County near Williamsburg. Additionally, as more and more people migrate from wired telephone service to wireless, the spacing of the existing sites cannot provide the reliable in-building communications services customers expect.

Over the last six months NTELOS has evaluated every existing structure in and outside an area where a new facility could be installed to fill in one of several major coverage gaps in the NTELOS York County network. We have also evaluated other properties for the construction of a new pole and facility. Based on an exhaustive review of the area and after evaluating all of the potential options, NTELOS entered into an agreement with York Schools for the Magruder location. We believe this is the best location for a number of factors:

- The Magruder School location is the best available location to fit into the existing NTELOS grid, including the anticipated activation of the Waller Mill School site later this year. The neighboring NTELOS communications sites are located at Exits 242 and 238 on I-64 to the east, at the James City County Government Center to the south and the new Waller Mill site to the northwest.

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PLANNING DIVISION

- The Magruder School site is located very near a City of Williamsburg owned water tank, an existing tall visual element, which has a screening effect on the proposed monopole from some viewing angles.
- Existing tree buffers on the school property, as well as the mature tree growth in the residential neighborhoods to the east and south, will effectively screen views of the structure from all homes except those immediately across Penniman Road and Hubbard Lane from Magruder School.
- Finally, York County Schools will receive a considerable revenue stream for use of the school site, not only from NTELOS, but from any future carriers collocating on the proposed site.

Alternate locations evaluated by NTELOS include:

- The City of Williamsburg water tank located behind James York Shopping Center. As of this date, the City has been unresponsive to our inquiries. Based on this and the fact that no other wireless companies are operating on the tank, we have come to the conclusion that the City is not interested in permitting communications equipment on this water tank.
- An existing tower owned by Colonial Williamsburg Foundations at their operations center on 5th Ave. Due to the low available elevation and its locations too far south, this site would be unable to provide connecting coverage to the Waller Mill site.
- Dominion Virginia Power transmission structures located between three-quarters to one and one quarter mile north of Magruder School. These structures failed structural analysis and are unable to support any communications equipment.
- We looked at replacing the tower located behind Fire Station #3 on Hubbard lane, but there is no available ground space for the ground equipment.
- NTELOS also attempted to find alternate ground sites for the construction of a new monopole. The only location with enough ground space available is the Holiday car dealership at 543 Second Street. They rejected a proposal to lease space at both this location and another property adjacent to Magruder School on Merrimac Trail.

The Magruder School location represents the best opportunity for NTELOS to improve communications services to the residential communities located between Route 143 and I-64 while minimizing the visual impacts to those communities by placing the structure close to a commercial district.